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AREI UPDATES: Land Trusts

Updates on Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators

Natural Resources and Environment Division
Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Number 13

Land Trusts Protected 14 Million Acres as of 1994

- Land protection here denotes direct involvement in voluntary land transactions, such as land or easement acquisitions, for conservation purposes.
- As of 1994, The Nature Conservancy had protected 8 million acres nationwide, up 51 percent from 1990. Other national land trusts had protected nearly 2 million acres.
- Over 1,000 local, State, and regional land trusts reported protection of an additional 4 million acres nationwide in 1994, up 49 percent from 1990.
- About half of all local, State, and regional land trusts, and half of all acres they have protected, are located in the Northeast. Over half of the land protected by The Nature Conservancy is located in the Mountain and Pacific States.

This issue of AREI Updates summarizes data from the The Nature Conservancy and from a survey, conducted by the Land Trust Alliance in 1994, of 1,145 local, State, and regional land trusts. Land trusts are nonprofit conservation organizations that protect land with a variety of environmental characteristics through direct involvement in voluntary land transaction activities. The Land Trust Alliance is an umbrella organization for local, State, and regional land trusts. The Nature Conservancy operates in all 50 States and specializes in the preservation of biodiversity. Other national land trusts, for which detailed data are not available, include the Conservation Fund

(873,295 acres protected as of 1994), the Trust for Public Land (669,000 acres), the National Audubon Society (150,000 acres), and the American Farmland Trust (40,191 acres).

The number of local, State, and regional land trusts grew by 30 percent between 1990 and 1994, to 1,145. Acreage protected grew by 49 percent, to 4.0 million acres. About 0.6 million acres were owned by such land trusts, 0.9 million acres were transferred to other private or government conservation agencies, 0.8 million acres were protected by conservation easements, and 1.8 million acres were protected by other means (table 1).

The Nature Conservancy had protected 7.8 million acres as of 1994, an increase of 51 percent over 1990. About 0.7 million acres were owned, 2.6 million acres had been transferred to other private or government conservation agencies, 0.6 million acres were protected by conservation easements, 1.8 million acres were protected under lease or management agreements, and 2.1 million acres were protected by other means (table 2).

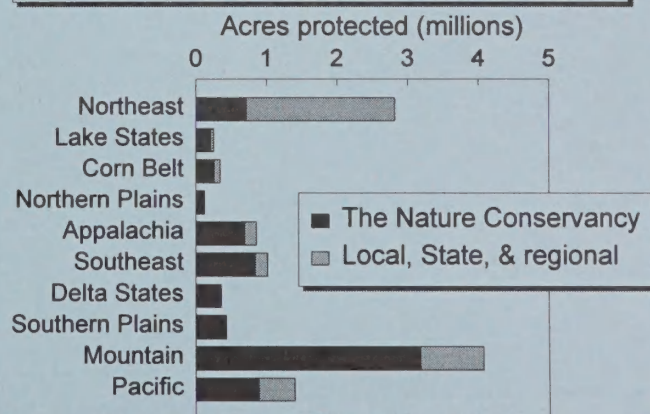
Acreage protected by The Nature Conservancy was highest in the Mountain States, at 3.2 million acres. Acreage protected by local, State, and regional land trusts was highest in the Northeast, at 2.1 million acres (fig. 1). Total combined acreage protected by The Nature Conservancy and by local, State, and regional land trusts represented 0.52 percent of U.S. land area (fig. 2).

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About AREI UPDATES

AREI UPDATES is a periodic series that supplements and updates information in *Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators (AREI)*, USDA, ERS, AH-705, Dec. 1994. UPDATES report recent data from surveys of farm operators and others knowledgeable about changing agricultural resource use and conditions, with only minimal interpretation or analysis. Please contact the individual listed at the end of the text for additional information about the data in this UPDATE. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have other questions about AREI UPDATES or AREI, contact Richard Magleby, (202) 219-0436.

Figure 1--Land protected by land trusts, 1994



Source: Land Trust Alliance & The Nature Conservancy

Table 1-- Land protected by local, state, and regional land trusts in the United States as of 1994

State	Land trusts		Acres protected (1)		Means of land protection (2)				Total as a % of State area
	Number	Change since 1990	Total	Change since 1990	Owned	Transferred	Under easement	Other	
	#	%	Acres	%	Acres protected				%
Northeast:	590	13.7	2,102,400	18.5	355,187	319,130	398,684	1,029,400	1.88
Connecticut	112	-1.8	42,575	19.9	26,175	2,605	10,829	2,967	1.37
Delaware	3	0.0	33,816	11.7	19,791	2,139	1,050	10,836	2.73
Maine	76	22.6	94,125	74.2	9,430	4,457	28,732	51,507	0.47
Maryland	36	16.1	64,949	57.8	6,992	4,484	51,646	1,827	1.03
Massachusetts	122	6.1	160,782	12.4	94,425	20,715	29,851	15,791	3.21
New Hampshire	24	-11.1	1,087,127	5.4	102,286	49,451	115,271	820,119	18.89
New Jersey	36	100.0	65,789	5.1	10,368	51,429	2,539	1,453	1.38
New York	69	11.3	125,248	76.5	31,934	17,062	41,319	34,933	0.41
Pennsylvania	55	44.7	326,836	31.5	36,042	157,899	52,281	80,615	1.14
Rhode Island	29	0.0	9,999	21.9	6,633	205	2,437	723	1.48
Vermont	28	40.0	91,155	87.9	11,111	8,685	62,728	8,631	1.54
Lake States:	61	38.6	44,126	61.2	28,954	6,879	7,527	767	0.04
Michigan	28	33.3	27,325	56.4	18,480	3,140	5,371	334	0.07
Minnesota	6	50.0	3,812	108.9	3,012	0	800	0	0.01
Wisconsin	27	42.1	12,990	60.8	7,462	3,739	1,356	433	0.04
Corn Belt:	76	15.2	91,739	15.3	29,248	27,759	5,015	29,717	0.06
Illinois	27	-10.0	44,288	2.7	8,253	25,948	2,443	7,645	0.12
Indiana	6	20.0	1,982	1357.6	1,954	3	10	16	0.01
Iowa	5	-16.7	27,457	36.0	5,478	110	490	21,379	0.08
Missouri	8	33.3	5,254	-1.6	4,054	1,198	2	0	0.01
Ohio	30	57.9	12,757	18.7	9,510	500	2,070	677	0.05
Northern Plains:	6	-14.3	19,661	86.1	17,935	0	1,726	0	0.01
Kansas	1	-50.0	16	*	0	0	16	0	0.00
Nebraska	4	33.3	15,665	48.3	13,955	0	1,710	0	0.03
North Dakota	1	0.0	3,980	*	3,980	0	0	0	0.01
South Dakota	0	-100.0	0	-100.0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Appalachia:	58	38.1	169,065	34.8	25,668	7,024	94,793	41,580	0.14
Kentucky	8	60.0	9,144	2566.0	557	25	264	8,298	0.04
North Carolina	20	33.3	35,364	15.0	6,949	2,851	2,179	23,386	0.11
Tennessee	14	55.6	18,928	34.0	5,877	630	2,525	9,896	0.07
Virginia	14	27.3	105,628	50.5	12,285	3,518	89,825	0	0.42
West Virginia	2	0.0	0	-100.0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Southeast:	56	69.7	173,945	209.8	49,913	87,495	24,777	11,761	0.14
Alabama	3	-25.0	22,077	2.5	19,154	538	0	2,385	0.07
Florida	27	50.0	103,397	345.8	27,163	48,854	18,270	9,110	0.30
Georgia	14	366.7	988	585.8	204	0	774	10	0.00
South Carolina	12	50.0	47,484	321.3	3,393	38,103	5,733	256	0.25
Delta States:	2	0.0	16,116	128.9	0	0	16,116	0	0.02
Arkansas	0	*	0	*	0	0	0	0	0.00
Louisiana	1	0.0	1,423	-5.1	0	0	1,423	0	0.00
Mississippi	1	0.0	14,693	165.2	0	0	14,693	0	0.05
Southern Plains:	12	20.0	7,115	-28.0	1,110	165	4,566	1,275	0.00
Oklahoma	0	*	0	*	0	0	0	0	0.00
Texas	12	20.0	7,115	-28.0	1,110	165	4,566	1,275	0.00
Mountain:	57	58.3	896,822	328.6	20,202	134,754	157,261	584,605	0.16
Arizona	6	50.0	1	*	1	0	0	0	0.00
Colorado	24	50.0	31,297	26.6	7,225	2,188	11,779	10,105	0.05
Idaho	6	100.0	2,672	8.4	673	1,537	362	100	0.01
Montana	6	0.0	838,120	423.1	10,232	130,832	134,973	562,083	0.90
Nevada	1	0.0	120	605.9	0	100	20	0	0.00
New Mexico	8	100.0	16,187	3.2	301	0	3,569	12,317	0.02
Utah	4	*	922	*	10	12	900	0	0.00
Wyoming	2	0.0	7,504	22.3	1,761	85	5,658	0	0.01
Pacific:	217	87.1	509,014	25.2	76,696	307,275	60,727	64,315	0.25
California	166	112.8	484,070	24.5	68,544	305,325	50,387	59,813	0.48
Oregon	17	41.7	2,358	39.2	540	213	1,401	204	0.00
Washington	34	30.8	22,586	38.7	7,612	1,737	8,939	4,298	0.05
Alaska	1	0.0	737	21.9	17	0	720	0	0.00
Hawaii	4	100.0	78	*	75	0	3	0	0.00
District of Columbia	4	300.0	294	2572.7	56	65	173	0	na
Puerto Rico	1	0.0	13,227	132.1	1,716	0	209	11,302	na
U.S. Total	1,145	30.0	4,044,339	49.1	606,778	890,544	772,296	1,774,722	0.18

Source: Land Trust Alliance.

(1) Acres reported by location of land trust (not necessarily by location of acreage). Some acreage may be protected by more than one land trust.

(2) "Transferred" refers to acreage acquired and transferred to a third party for conservation purposes. "Other" includes management agreements, negotiation, and other means.

* Land trusts or acres protected were 0 in 1990.

Table 2—Land protected by The Nature Conservancy in the United States as of December 31, 1994

	Acres protected		Means of land protection (1)					Total as a % of State area
State	Total	Change since 1990	Owned	Transferred	Under easement	Leased or managed	Other	
	Acres	%	Acres protected					%
Northeast:	715,367	16.8	97,494	225,773	129,569	15,278	247,254	0.64
Connecticut	23,507	10.0	9,022	6,268	1,583	281	6,353	0.75
Delaware	4,846	412.0	2,747	1,112	0	324	663	0.39
Maine	94,616	7.2	21,412	24,086	3,271	2,449	43,398	0.48
Maryland	40,817	25.0	9,085	11,030	3,334	25	17,343	0.65
Massachussetts	14,484	47.0	1,229	3,645	736	1,933	6,942	0.29
New Hampshire	57,881	1.3	4,651	2,618	2,728	52	47,831	1.01
New Jersey	23,404	47.8	7,374	10,496	76	0	5,458	0.49
New York	283,227	7.9	26,322	84,298	113,728	9,402	49,478	0.93
Pennsylvania	37,231	17.2	4,552	8,954	2,364	723	20,639	0.13
Rhode Island	9,661	63.5	590	3,355	487	0	5,228	1.43
Vermont	125,694	45.9	10,509	69,912	1,262	89	43,922	2.12
Lake States:	205,411	21.8	51,840	87,284	6,716	312	59,259	0.17
Michigan	63,084	11.5	14,291	29,391	0	147	19,254	0.17
Minnesota	95,086	34.7	26,948	43,403	957	2	23,775	0.19
Wisconsin	47,241	14.0	10,601	14,489	5,759	162	16,231	0.14
Corn Belt:	253,609	66.3	45,514	151,005	440	1,193	55,456	0.15
Illinois	32,013	11.1	7,740	17,817	166	95	6,196	0.09
Indiana	33,305	18.8	9,574	14,516	131	110	8,975	0.14
Iowa	28,422	3.0	1,613	1,594	64	509	24,641	0.08
Missouri	124,272	231.0	13,265	104,422	0	365	6,220	0.28
Ohio	35,597	16.8	13,324	12,656	80	114	9,424	0.14
Northern Plains:	103,527	39.9	41,207	20,667	331	2,119	39,203	0.05
Kansas	21,352	46.1	16,299	4,722	331	0	0	0.04
Nebraska	31,139	126.1	6,026	4,702	0	1,920	18,492	0.06
North Dakota	34,632	11.5	8,710	9,249	0	199	16,474	0.08
South Dakota	16,404	12.8	10,173	1,993	0	0	4,238	0.03
Appalachia:	688,421	10.9	88,195	281,053	43,896	30,643	244,634	0.56
Kentucky	16,488	45.9	4,669	10,300	0	496	1,023	0.06
North Carolina	374,118	11.5	28,052	132,084	41,482	2,292	170,209	1.20
Tennessee	57,018	4.3	1,671	38,475	4	14,685	2,183	0.22
Virginia	203,190	8.0	49,335	85,649	2,189	13,155	52,862	0.80
West Virginia	37,607	21.7	4,469	14,545	221	15	18,357	0.24
Southeast:	838,325	23.4	70,993	397,555	63,463	18,974	287,340	0.68
Alabama	24,951	10.8	384	3,327	0	0	21,240	0.08
Florida	531,936	22.9	34,328	246,339	16,855	18,920	215,493	1.53
Georgia	141,630	3.7	15,462	98,359	1,062	1	26,745	0.38
South Carolina	139,808	59.9	20,819	49,530	45,546	52	23,862	0.72
Delta States:	341,200	35.7	15,918	158,212	30	26,074	140,967	0.37
Arkansas	120,740	58.3	1,434	46,827	6	292	72,181	0.36
Louisiana	139,886	39.1	13,335	47,294	0	24,502	54,754	0.49
Mississippi	80,575	8.0	1,148	64,091	23	1,280	14,033	0.27
Southern Plains:	426,650	30.6	100,677	255,142	2,465	7,329	61,036	0.20
Oklahoma	80,648	77.2	41,231	22,287	145	3,434	13,551	0.18
Texas	346,002	23.0	59,446	232,855	2,320	3,895	47,485	0.21
Mountain:	3,178,772	98.1	94,524	687,411	266,460	1,468,457	715,024	0.58
Arizona	215,892	4.6	11,017	11,736	876	130,867	61,397	0.30
Colorado	80,729	16.2	9,446	26,539	32,941	2,451	9,351	0.12
Idaho	65,214	20.7	16,512	13,298	4,004	1,584	29,817	0.12
Montana	275,086	9.8	26,552	104,841	168,963	19,491	8,344	0.30
Nevada	1,235,358	1,211.5	2,047	24,850	5,104	850,617	352,741	1.76
New Mexico	722,886	0.0*	776	477,309	17,174	103,230	124,397	0.93
Utah	423,955	995.5	2,673	22,598	158	330,176	68,350	0.81
Wyoming	159,651	102.6	25,501	6,240	37,241	30,042	60,627	0.26
Pacific:	889,014	41.8	100,162	253,397	61,171	233,271	241,011	0.44
California	694,237	54.0	55,850	221,770	58,908	226,550	131,159	0.69
Oregon	166,084	9.1	37,957	23,021	1,731	6,140	97,235	0.27
Washington	28,693	20.8	6,355	8,607	533	581	12,618	0.07
Alaska	45,169	3,349.2	0	44,612	546	0	11	0.01
Hawaii	50,149	8.4	6,506	20,526	10,065	11,942	1,110	1.22
U.S. Virgin Islands	338	17.3	61	277	0	0	0	na
U.S. Total (2)	7,809,898	51.2	712,367	2,601,954	585,154	1,817,750	2,092,672	0.34

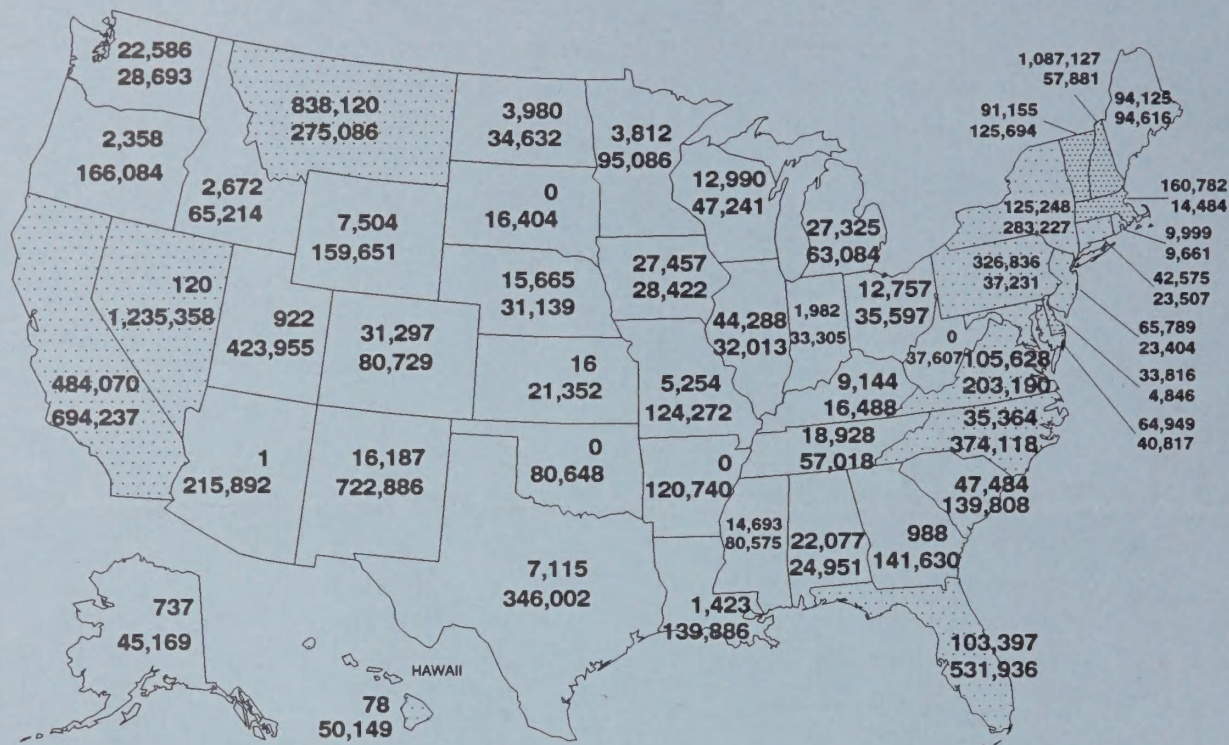
Source: The Nature Conservancy.

(1) "Transferred" refers to acreage transferred to a third party for conservation purposes. "Other" refers to Registry program participation and other means.

(2) Rows may not sum to totals due to unapportioned data.

* 1990 data are incomplete for New Mexico.

Figure 2--Land protected by land trusts, 1994



U.S. 4,044,339
 Top number: Local, State, and regional land trust acreage
 Bottom number: Nature Conservancy acreage 7,809,898

Source: Land Trust Alliance and The Nature Conservancy

Percent of State protected
 Less than 1.0
 1.0 thru 3.0
 More than 3.0

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